1: Burrows--85
116, 561, 882

(1947-48)

Woleaians
Ifalik

"Some groups formed on the basis of age-those of children and (approximately) adolescents-have a more continuous existence. They are united also by common residence, for it is only the children, or the youths, of one particular neighborhood who play together regularly. Quite young children play in groups that include both sexes. (By 'quite young' is meant here old enough to talk and be fairly sure-footed, but too young to wear clothes, which are put on at about the age when our children begin school.) But when they reach adolescence their only distinct groups are limited by sex as well. It is only the young men who form groups of any permanence. Adolescent girls, more restricted by custom to their own households, may go out together to gather pandanus leaves for a mat, or carry on some similar task; but these gatherings, like other work gangs, disband when the job is finished. Formerly, when the unmarried men slept in a men's house, of which there were several at one time, or in one of the canoe-houses, they were almost continuously together. But of late they separate every night to sleep in the households of their relatives. Pre-marital sexual relationships, permitted by custom on Ifalik as in many Pacific islands, are not carried on by groups, as in parts of Polynesia and Melanesia, but by isolated couples, who meet secretly to avoid gossip."

2: Damm et al. --77 [2] (1909) 1938 Woleaians
116, 561, 192 Ifaluk

Terms used to designate age:
nursling sălidali
little boy, little girl sălidali măl or sălidali djăwud.
big boy dăli măl
big girl dalăiwid
man măl
woman djăwud or făifil
bachelor, also widower ?
old maid, also widow libĭdj
old man dufĕi
old woman djăwud dufĕi

4: Krämer--268
116, 561

(1909) 1937

Woleaians
Woleai

Stages in the Life of a Woman

taraivel — girls before menstruation

daurang — girl menstruates and wears the grasscloth which is called sivisif.

nikabal — single or married women who wear the mat gabalabal

malioüteg — married woman with mat. Other terms for a married woman are: ril, fitial, ĕsagal, djoelevúgetal, djoele, gáneal, ĕtial, djoele iti telivulemel djal.

nipes — spinsters or widows

esamesoutagel — "her husband dead," widows and widowers. The former is in mourning for a year and usually is a hetaera.

4: Krämer--269
116, 561

(1909) 1937

Woleaians
Woleai

Stages in the Life of a Man

boy	tharemal
youth	taremāl
man	mal
old man	tógobei
very old man	málelap

28: Spiro--24
116, 623, 561

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians
Ifalik

"Another fairly constant factor at the meetings is the contrast between the attitudes of the older and younger people. Whereas the former take the meetings very seriously, with one exception--that of the priest--doctor--the younger men seemed little interested in the proceedings. For example, at one of the meetings, the young men were very slow in arriving, and did not sit in or around the fanap, but sat in the canoe house quite a distance from the fanap. Taroman rebuked them for this, and ordered them into the fanap, and they were quite slow in obeying his directions."

28: Spiro--32 [2]
116, 575, 561

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians
Ifalik

"There are no sodalities in Ifaluk, no groupings of a voluntary nature, that is. Professional, secret, or religious societies do not exist. Neither are there age grades. It is true that there are five categories into which all ages are classified, but they are highly nebulous and fluid, and are, by no means, organized into groups with definite social responsibilities and privileges."

28: Spiro--102 (1947-48) 1949 Woleaians-1-1
116, 858, 561, 865 Ifalik

"The children in this group--between the latency period and pre-puberty are, unquestionably, the least favored group. The infants are pampered and overindulged. The pre-puberty children, though not indulged, have a favorable position. They are economic assets, and hence have the respect of their parents and adults. They enjoy many adult prerogatives, such as assistance in adult work, free mobility, and, in the case of the boys, a position of equality in the canoe houses, where they may lounge or work as of right, and not by sufferance. The intermediate group has none of these privileges. Furthermore, having been dethroned by the infant, they find themselves subservient to the older children. The latter order them around, have them fetch objects for them, etc.

This means that they have no visible means of ego support. The older children receive their emotional response from their peers, looking to them for esteem and affection, and together can pit themselves, if necessary, against the adult world. The younger children do not have that source. Having experienced a traumatic rejection they have not yet learned to establish genuine interractional patterns with their peers. Furthermore, they are still attempting to ingratiate themselves with their parents, and view their peers as possible threats to such attempts. Thus, as we shall soon see, there is much rivalry between the children for the attention of the adult, and aggression between

themselves. Since, children are instructed from the time they can speak that aggression is the most heinous offence, and they are punished should they fight, there would probably be much more of it were it allowed fuller expression."

28: Spiro--108-109
116, 857, 561

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians-1-2
Ifalik

"Children are seldom alone, or out of the sight or ears of the adults. Usually the locale of their play is a courtyard, in view of the women, or in front of a canoe house, in view of the men. Often sit around the canoe houses with the men, doing nothing in particular merely engaging in random movement or rest. The children are not separated from the adults by age differences, and are permitted access to adult groups and activities, so that in the canoe houses they are accepted without protest by the men, and no attempt is made to create bars, or barriers. Though children and adults have differenential [sic] interests, and though there is little question as to which group is dominant and which submissive, there is no marked dichotomy between the children's and the adults' worlds. They both live and interract in the same world, though they play differential roles. It is natural, therefore, that they should play in the canoe houses, or enter them as equals of the men. The little girls may do so as well, something which the adult women may not do, for once a woman has reached puberty she may not enter a canoe house, except with the permission of the men.

A brief quotation from my field notes may illustrate this point. The behavior here described is typical of the daily routine in the canoe houses. As I entered the canoe house, three young men were making rope, as was one of the older boys. A man in his middle twenties was just sitting, while an older man was holding his baby granddaughter

on his lap, and another young married man was lying with his baby son on his stomach. Three young children were lying about. I lay down on a mat, and one of the little girls came over to lie down beside me, putting her arms about me. The baby girl began to mess up the rope of one of the young men, who only laughed, picked her up, and began to play with her. She was then taken by another of the young men, who passed her on to another, until she made the round.

One of the young boys began to make rope, the other watching him. In a little while the latter attempted to wrest the rope from the former, whereupon he became [109] angry, threw the rope at him, and ran out of the canoe house. The baby boy left his father's lap to sit on a board, and began to chew on sugar cane, part of which he offered me. One of the young men called him over, and had him puff on his cigarette. He enjoyed this tremendously, jumping up and down, and clapping his hands with glee. Another man came in, and shortly after his step-daughter came in, and sat on his lap. One of the boys now tried to pull the penis of one of the young men, but the latter rebuffed him. He attempted the same on some of the others but met the same reaction. He lay down, chewing on a twig. The little girl was singing to herself. Suddenly one of the children left the canoe house, and called to another and together they began to throw their tops in to the air. Soon the third child joined them, and they were at their games again."

28: Spiro--122 (1947-48) 1949 Woleaians
116, 805, 561 Ifalik

"The people, as we have seen, do not know their ages, since they do not count the passing of time. The exact knowledge of a person's age would be useless information in this culture. There are, however, five categories of age classes, which serve to classify people, but these classes are not age-grades, and the distinctions between them are not marked by abrupt discontinuities. They merge almost imperceptibly into each other, with the exception of the change from the state of zari-rauwut, girl, to that of tari-veivel, young woman, which is abrupt, being brought on by the first menstrual flow, and marked by the menstrual ceremony. These age classifications are:

Male	Female	Translation	
		M	F
ligau	sauwau	infant	infant
zari-man	tari-trauwut	boy	girl
Tari-man	Tari-veivel	young man	young woman
Mann	trauwut	man	woman
Tuvai-man	tuvai-trauwut	old man	old woman"

28: Spiro--137
116, 888, 561, 554

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians
Ifalik

"As far as I can determine age brings neither greater nor less prestige. It is true that the old are not as economically useful as the young but it seems that the subsistence is plentiful enough so that their relative economic inactivity is not viewed as a drag on the economy. On the other hand, their greater age is not, ipso facto, an indication of greater wisdom. A wise person retains his wisdom as he ages. A mediocre person is no wiser because of age. Formally, therefore, there seems to be little if any cultural evaluation placed on old age. It must be remembered, furthermore, that this is an egalitarian society, in which general statuses are about equal, and in which only specific statuses differ. This is, the status of a navigator or carpenter, or fisherman is higher than others, which are about equal. Differential status, therefore, is almost always a function of achievement in a specific activity. This being the case, the status continues into old age.

At no time did I see the slightest indication of resentment against an older person because of inability to perform certain tasks.

On the other hand, though the culture does not evaluate age in terms of any invidious distinctions, the aging person may very well experience the process of aging as more or less pleasant than youth. In speaking with the men, they said that the reactions to old age are not the same. An old man usually cannot marry a young girl, he cannot engage in many kinds of work, the Japanese would not hire him for labor, and thus he could make no money. On the other hand, the old man has prestige and respect, and young people will turn to them for advice, since they 'savvy many thing.'"

28: Spiro--146 [2] (1947-48) 1949 Woleaians
116, 561, 868 Ifalik

"In both the case of men and of women, age differences imply no social differences. An older woman might be requested by a younger woman to examine the skirt she is making if she has a difficulty. A younger man may ask an older man for help on a fine point in the making of a fish trap. But, in all cases, there seems to be no social differentials based on age."

41: Bates & Abbott N-5 (1953) 1958
OR21 Woleai OR21
Ifaluk

tural changes brought by the West—changes in clothing, in housing, in diet, in customs—have tended to increase the disease problem rather than to alleviate it. But that is a pet peeve of mine.

The population history of Ifaluk itself is not clear. Counts by anthropologists during the period of German control showed populations of 281 in 1903 and 208 in 1909, with an estimate of 300 for 1914. The drop between the first two counts may be a result of the typhoon of 1907—not only direct mortality, but also emigration to other islands as a consequence of food shortage.

The older Ifalukians thought that more people had lived on the island formerly; and from their stories I got to thinking that the population might at some time have reached as much as 500. This was based on accounts of times when even coconuts were carefully shared and nothing was wasted. Abandoned household sites in the village areas might be evidence of some population decline and there were stories of an epidemic, soon after the Japanese appeared, when as many as a dozen people died in a day. This, clearly, was smallpox; and the Japanese started vaccination, which has been maintained by the American authorities.

The island, in 1953, was not overpopulated. The land surface of the atoll was about a half a square mile, so the population of 260 people would represent a density of about 520 persons per square mile: a rather dense population, but we must remember that the people of Ifaluk had also the resources of their lagoon and of the surrounding seas. Ifaluk seemed to me to represent an economy of abundance, and this probably in part explains the idyllic living conditions that prevailed. With more people, with the same resources and the same cultural equipment, life might have been more difficult and unpleasant.

The Ifalukians certainly seemed not only happy, but healthy. It is difficult to make exact comparisons between the Ifalukians and other people because of our uncertainty about precise ages, so that one is likely to be averaging fifteen-year-olds with thirty-year-olds. In general, however, the men seemed to be somewhat smaller and lighter than the American average. The tallest man of the island, Sepemal, was a half inch under six feet. The heaviest (Wolpaitig, the number

41: Bates & Abbott N-5 (1953) 1958
OR21 Woleai OR21
Ifaluk

five chief) weighed 182 pounds with a height of 5′ 7½″. Wolpaitig came closest of any man on the island to having a paunch.

The women were considerably more under American averages for height or weight. They were generally only an inch or so over or under five feet, weighing not much over a hundred pounds. The heaviest, a matron named Ietili of the Garotrong household, weighed 150 pounds, and was 5′ 1½″ tall. Ted suspected that the small size and light weight of the women was a consequence of the fact that they carried out the regular toil of the island—the heavy gardening work of the taro swamps as well as the work around the houses.

The Ifalukians would be classed as Micronesians: but what that means is anybody's guess. "Micronesia" is a geographical term to cover the hundreds of "tiny islands" of the Marianas, the Carolines, the Marshalls and the Gilberts. The inhabitants of these island groups, the Micronesians, are hardly to be distinguished from the more famous Polynesians: a rapid survey of several anthropology texts shows that the two are more often classed together than not. The inhabitants of the various island groups of Micronesia are certainly more diverse, both culturally and physically, than the inhabitants of Polynesia: but the similarities among all of these light-skinned people of the Pacific are greater than their differences. And the problem of the origin and history of the Ifalukians, of the Caroline Islanders, of the Micronesians, cannot be separated from the much-discussed problem of the origin of the Polynesians.

I think part of the European fascination with Polynesia (which would apply equally to the people of the central Carolines) comes from the fact that these people look very much like ourselves. The features of the Ifalukians were very European, and I amused myself by noting resemblances in certain individuals, in features or apparent characters, to particular friends or acquaintances in the States. The people were not really dark-skinned: both Don and I acquired a skin color within a month that matched the Ifalukian average, as determined by frequent comparisons of arms placed side by side. A pair of naked legs walking by the Fan Nap, observed under the low over-hang of thatch, could not be identified as Ifalukian or American. The Ifalukians